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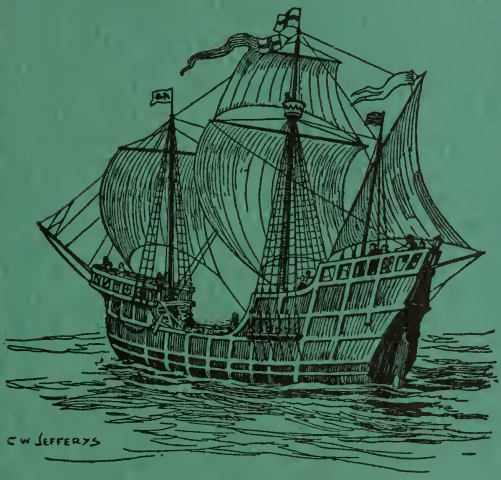
My Ships of Yesterday

and Other Poems



by

EMMA VEAZEY

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Sincerely yours
Emma Pengy

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My Ships of Yesterday

and Other Poems

EMMA VEAZEY

MY SHIPS OF YESTERDAY

AS twilight falls,
And soft grey shadows lengthen,
Back from the Port,
The far-off Port of Hopes and Dreams,
They come to me,
My Ships of Yesterday.

Silent they come;
But well I know their cargoes;
Dear Memories,
Ambitions, hopes, and childish dreams,
And one and all
I welcome them again.

A sadness? yes!
To think they cast their anchors
In no other port.
But what were life forever shorn
Of hopes and dreams,
The dreams of by-gone days?

Glides from the Past
Bright sails so proudly filling,—
The sea around
All glowing with a rosy light,
My Ship of Love,
The pure glad love of youth.

What matters it,
If with the years came knowledge
That love and pain
Ofttimes through life go hand in hand?
I cherish still
That dream of early youth.

Behind it comes
My ship with dreams of Fame;
Tall were her masts,
And staunch and strong her timbers were;
Or thus it seemed
When youth and hope were one.

I would not lose
My phantom Ship of Fame;
Fame's but a dream,—
Smiling I see her disappear,
The port she made
The misty Port of Dreams.

And so they come
Out from the shadowy Past.
More real they are,—
Those cherished Ships of Yesterday,
Than those which made
Long since the port desired.

DOWN ST. CROIX TO THE SEA

WE are gliding down the River,
Where the bright waves dance and quiver
In the light.
Fleecy clouds above are sailing,
Here and there the blue sky veiling
From our sight.

Where the prow the wave is parting,
You can see the fish quick darting
To and fro.
And the very joy of living,
Drives away all sad misgiving,
As we go.

Wider now with banks receding,
We are making all unheeding
For the sea.
Fresher breeze the depths are waking;
O'er our deck the foam is breaking
Mistily.

Now the tang of the salt ocean,
And the music of the motion
Of the tide.
In the hollow caves resounding,
From the rocky cliffs rebounding,
Far and wide.

Overhead the seagulls flying
Ocean's power are defying
With their cries.
Yonder in the distance low'ring
Stands the lighthouse grimly tow'ring
'Gainst the skies.

Seaward, seaward, ever heading,
God's vast highway now we're threading,
Unafraid.
Till through lifting screen of vapours
Harbour lights gleam forth like tapers,
Port is made.

THE LITTLE BOATS GO BY

WHILE yet the dark still lingers,
And white mist wreaths hang low;
Wraith-like, across the waters,
The little fish boats go.

Men faring forth to labour,
They toil while others sleep;
Almost they seem to be a part
Of the great restless deep.

The muffled throb of engines
Grows faint and fainter yet.
The little boats have vanished
Into the dark and wet.

I turn again to slumber;
A thought,—merged in a prayer;
That He who stilled blue Galilee
Might have them in His care.

ANSWER, JUDGE!

BLACK RASTUS stood before the Judge;
In serious plight was he;
Assault and battery the charge;
And this was Rastus' plea.

"He called me a 'black rascal,' Jedge.
And I'm jest astin' you,
If a no 'count nigger called you dat,
What would Yo' Honour do?"

The Judge suppressed a sudden smile.
"But I'm not black," said he.
"I hardly think that epithet
Would be applied to me."

"Ob cos not, Jedge, no mo' it would;
But sposen he called you
Da kin' ob rascal dat yo' *is*,
What would Yo' Honour do?"

WITH TORCH ALIGHT

THEY tell us of a race run in Old Greece,—
A race in which the noblest would compete;
Each held a lighted torch within his hand,
And to the goal set off with eager feet.

Not to the swiftest always went the prize,—
Though speed must be a factor in the fight,—
But he who would the victor's laurel wear,
Must reach the goal the first *with torch alight.*

Canst see them as on wingèd feet they fly,
Their god-like bodies flashing as they go;
With ever and anon the upward look,
Lest spent should be their torches' ruddy glow?

Oh Youth to-day, so eager for the race,
To reach the goal you strive with all your might,—
That goal success; but oh! look to your torch,
And see that you arrive with soul alight.

Only the upward look can make you sure
That steady glows the flame within the soul.
Only the upward look into the Unseen
Can bring you, torch alight, safe to your goal.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

UNDIMMED by the ages, shine on, O! star
That guided the Wise Men from afar.
To-day, as of old, may thy steady glow
Reveal the Babe in the manger low;
And the Angels' song ring forth again,
As it rang that night on Judean plain.

Oh! well for this war-scarred earth, that still
The Christmas bells ring "Peace, Good-will;"
And well for the hearts that are tuned to hear
Those vibrant notes so sweet and clear!
For they tell that the Christ of the Angels' lay
Still reigns o'er this saddened earth to-day.

TIM

TIM, you indolent feline!
Lying there in careless grace;
Lithe limbs disposed so casually;
Gray paw shading smug gray face.

Must you appropriate my chair?
And must I let it go at that,
And tolerate this straight, hard seat;
Nor venture an indignant "Scat!"

Your ancestors across the sea
Where oozy Nile pursues its way,
Were held in reverence by our kind;
And you demand as much to-day.

On things that have been and are not
Those half-veiled eyes seem still to dwell;
Does Time roll backward bringing faint
The tinkle of a temple bell?

But these are fancies, Tim, old scout!
Though you suggest the Sphinx to-day,
To-morrow you'll be just a cat
With topaz eyes. So "Scat!" I say.

EASTER

LIFE,—where Death reigned
Green-springing sod!
Bloom from the mould!
Everywhere,—God!

Think of them not,—
Your glorious dead,
Low-lying in earth
Riven and red.

Think of them rather,
Beyond the dim portal;
Risen with Christ,
Victors,—Immortal!

CANADA

HAIL to the land I love,
Canada!
Revered all lands above.
Land of the purling stream,
Land where the soft lights gleam
Land of the poet's dream,
Canada!

Where lies thy charm for me,
Canada?
Wild coast or inland sea?
Wide stretching prairie land,
Mountains that snow-capped stand,
Forests, majestic, grand,
Canada?

Not these alone the spell,
Canada!
Though these might charm full well.
To me their greatness cries,
"From strength to strength arise;
Gird thee to high emprise."
For Canada.

Mother across the sea,
Canada,
Stretches her hands to thee;
Proud of her ancestry,
Strong in her loyalty,
True to her destiny,
Canada.

EASTER MORNING

COME ye apart and rest!
Oh, let the Easter calm
Rebuke thy frenzied strivings.
Christ is risen!
The quiet of His presence
Falls like balm
On troubled spirit;
Come apart and rest!

Easter's glad message learn,
The risen Christ is here,
In this dim house of prayer
All lily-sentinelled.
Tarry, and feel Him near!
Easter,—His life quickened in thee!
The lily's springing mystery!
Death's overthrow,—Life's victory!

WHERE PEACE DWELLETH

HAD He not come,—the Bethlehem Babe, God-given—
Hopeless, this sad old earth must take its weary way;
Had He not come, proclaimed by Hosts of heaven,
Where should we seek for dawn of fairer day?

But lo! He came; and Wise Men knelt before Him,
In David's ancient city long ago.
They knew Him King, though throned in lowly manger;
And following His star to-day, we too, may know.

Speak peace, O Lord, unto a world bewildered!
Hopeless we drift until we own Thy sway,
And kneeling find, as found the way-worn sages,
The clear fulfilment of a better day.

YE EVERLASTING GATES SWING WIDE!

DOWN from the place called Calvary
They came,—the deed was done;
And soldier questioned soldier,
"Think you He was God's Son?"
And soldier answered soldier,
"Yea, verily God's Son."

Rock-hewn His tomb in the garden.
Sealed,—guarded by His foes.
Yet there, triumphant over Death,
The Christ of Calvary rose.
And a mighty thing had come to pass,
When the Christ of Calvary rose.

Up from the Mount called Olivet,
With hands in blessing spread,
The risen Christ ascended.
Ye Gates, lift up your head!
Ye everlasting Doors, swing wide!
He lives, who once was dead!

POPPIES—FOR REMEMBRANCE

FOR remembrance,—little flower,
Perhaps we need you for this hour.

Every flaming poppy cries
Of a soldier's sacrifice.

So amid the noise and fret,
We would pause,—"Lest we forget."

Through thy magic we behold
Youth which never shall grow old.

Youth all starkly offered up.
Theirs a bitter, bitter cup!

Well may their graves beyond the sea
Shrines become of memory.

Well may their bodies racked by pain
Call to us nor call in vain.

Scarlet poppy we'll remember!
Mem'ries throng in gray November.

SOLDIER, REST!

SOLDIER, rest! no armèd tread
Shall profane the sacred dead;
Rest thee in thy narrow bed!

Peace,—such peace as comes from God,—
Hovers round the silent sod
Where the warring hosts have trod.

Yours no more the din of strife,
Reddened fields with carnage rife,
Yours the fuller, higher life!

Pride and grief for mastery,
Struggle as we think of thee
Dying there so valiantly.

For the weak your life you gave,—
He who died the world to save,
Saith "Greater love can no man have."

Soldier, rest! for not in vain
Are the suff'ring and the pain;
Life—eternal life—we gain!

DR. W. S. CARTER

Late Chief Superintendent of Education, New Brunswick

A TRIBUTE

NO longer here? The strong undaunted spirit
So swiftly sped!
All unconvinced we say the strange words over,—
"The Chief is dead."

And yet 'tis well. For so he would have had it,
Straight from his task,—
What better ending to a life of service
Could mortal ask?

And we who loved him for the stern, high purpose
That must achieve,
Knew equally the kindly, helpful service
He could give.

Contempt for aught but honest work, I grant you.
Straight, straight and true
He sought the goal. Yet fainting hearts he strengthened
To see things through.

And he is gone. A pillar swept from under,
Swept swift and clean;
But ever where the structure rises, rises,
His strength is seen.

And ever as the vision grows and deepens,
And time goes on,
We'll learn how truly laid were the foundations
He built upon.

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